

<p style="text-align: center;">Sustainability Commission Green Infrastructure Working Group Meeting Report</p>
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Date: Wednesday, June 18th 6pm, Neighborhood Design Center

Subject: Green Infrastructure Working Group Community Conversation

In Attendance: Kion Lathan, Alan Cohen, Jill Jonnes, Lowell Larsson, Miriam Avins, Mark Cameron, Jonas Risen, Michael Beer, Guy Hager, James Sherman, Rebecca Ruggles, Maria Allwine, Myra Brosius, Mary Hardcastle, Chris Streb, Pearnell Wilson, Kate Edwards, Alyson Taylor, Beth Strommen, Tom Stosur

Discussion: The meeting began with an overview of the Baltimore Sustainability Commission and a discussion of the working definition for Green Infrastructure. This was followed by a Wish list exercise in which all participants discussed their top issues for the Green Infrastructure portion of the sustainability plan to address. The meeting then moved into the bumper sticker exercise, where participants wrote a bumper sticker slogan which expressed their vision for the Baltimore Sustainability Plan. Finally there was a discussion of the draft vision statement and potential amendments followed by next steps.

Topics addressed:

Introductions

Alyson Taylor presented Sustainability Commission Powerpoint – with overview of the Commission and the working groups.

Discussion of the definition of Green Infrastructure – working definition was presented.

“The City's network of green space, including forest & stream valleys, parks & playgrounds, streetscapes, community gardens, and vacant lots that provide the basic ingredients of life and improve public health, safety and quality of life. The benefits of Green Infrastructure include cleaner air & water, reduced heat island effect, plant & animal habitat, opportunities for recreation and interaction with the natural environment, gathering places for social connections, softening of the built environment, increased property value and access to healthy food.”

Wish List Exercise (vision for Baltimore) – lead by Rebecca Ruggles

- Large forested areas
- Unmown natural parks (Exp. Stony Run)
- Public education on urban forest appearance
- Change path of rainwater – seep rather than run to streams
- Street trees – high priority – maximize

- Dedicated funding stream for parks and other Green Infrastructure, so that it is not necessary to depend on the City's General Fund and compete with police, education etc.
- Heterogeneity in design, size, use of green space
- Green roofs for all – resident, commercial, institutional
- Green infrastructure should shape the built environment
- Purpose is healthy lives, health living
- Assign economic value (accounting) to green assets
- Ethic of stewardship & common benefits should be promoted
- Develop a more natural system of harvesting storm water
- Native plantings & other minimal maintenance choices
- Market the network of parks for greater public use
- Neighborhood park adoption program – community pride, safety
- Sensitivity to ecosystems; competing needs for water
- Proactively address deficit areas, where there are gaps/lacks
- More city farms; people learning to grow their own food
- Fill up the existing parks
- Rethink G.I. as the Green Matrix
- Focus on natural water flow & cycle, not on storm water (result of built environment)
- Doubling the amount of shade & trees in the City
- Maintenance and management of urban forest through community involvement
- Public investment in managing the green matrix
- Promote more tree planting on private property
- Public education on right tree, right place
- Fund from development dedicated to increase green matrix (through fees or taxes)
- Give communities power to be stewards – fountains fixed, lights, etc.
- Neighborhood ideas able to rise up
- Community gardens, pocket parks for local food production
- Baltimore City Farm – for larger scale food production
- Public understands green places are source of restoration
- Create a place where the birds & worms want to be with us
- Teach about global warming in schools
- Increasing access to water for views and recreation
- Treating water access and views as a public good
- Sculpture & landscape art – an art fund for outdoor art
- Promote private land use – edible yards, replacing lawns w/ woodland
- Creating ideas for small back yards (row houses) – create more models
- Overcome negative messages – anti-green
- Liberating streams now buried in pipes underground
- Recycling leaves, grass, mulch instead of fertilizer

Grassy Field

- William Whyte, The Last Landscape – good reading
- Discussion of barriers to the visions on the “wish list”

Bumper Sticker Exercise – lead by Chris Streb

Balti**MORE GREEN** – 8 votes

It's Not Easy Being Green – 4 votes

A Crowded Park is a Happy Park, Go visit yours today – 4 votes

Slow the Flow – 3 votes

Park It! – 3 votes

Beleaf – 3 votes

Our Parks, Our Lakes, Our City – 2 votes

Trees are healthy for children & other living things – 2 votes

Healthy Environment, Healthy You – 2 votes

Plant Seeds of Green Education in Youth! – 1 vote

My Yard is Greener than Yours! – 1 vote

Green Neighborhoods = Our New Baltimore

Be GREEN, hon! – 1 vote

Make Baltimore a Green Tapestry – 1 vote

Love Your Parks, Green Your City

Grow Your Own

The Matrix was Here First!

Clean Green less Global Warming Machine

Green Space – Use it or Lose it!

5 Trees for Everyone Makes a City that Breathes

Rx= Green

Vision Statement Discussion – lead by Alyson Taylor

Draft Vision – Have a diverse, accessible and connected system of parks, streets, and community open spaces that engage people, use resources wisely, create healthy and comfortable places, are safe and well maintained, and provide economic opportunities for the citizens of the city.

- Provide services in a natural way
- Private space
- Diversity of plants & animals
- Food production
- Recreation – water
- Air quality
- Stewardship/ participation
- Daily accessibility/ seamlessly integrated
- Private space
- Public appreciation of the value of G.I.
- Education
- Job Creation
- ...to continue to develop diverse...
- Soil contaminants – safe soil – restoring regenerating
- Natural resources

Next Steps

- Standing Working Group members will use feedback to refine Green Infrastructure definition and to create a vision statement for Green Infrastructure in Baltimore.
- Definition and Vision Statement will be presented to full Sustainability Commission at next Commission meeting on Tuesday June 24th, 4-6 PM
- Wish list and feedback collected at this meeting will be used to inform goals, targets and indicators which will be discussed in more detail at future meetings.